

Inkslingers Blended Session

23rd September 2023

The Prompt from The Bag Was:

“I Know This May Be Hard To Believe ”

And the Visual



Venus Fly Trap

Hard to Believe

Clíodhna Joyce-Daly

The blast of air conditioning hit Margaret's face as she entered into the noise induced shop. Chills began to form along her arms as the attempt at the store's temperature shielded its customers from the wrath of the city's humidity. She initially went in for refuge as the white summer dress she so boldly wore highlighted patches of sweat gathered from the subway and the compacted streets. She also desperately needed the toilet.

The mere of existence of aristocratic store attached to a subway line served one purpose only – the ideal location of a free and clean toilet. As the frosty breeze consumed the bottom of her dress, Margaret hoped the wind would cause the swear stains to disappear. Wrong time to wear dark knickers, she thought to herself.

As Margaret made her way through the perfumes, bags and the clerks selling you everything but a house – she couldn't help but think how much she felt uncomfortable in the eliteness of the surroundings. There was countless rows and pillars illuminating the most chic, off the runway fashion, with its admirers so oblivious to the very city that garnered one the worst housing crisis' in the world. About 500 metres outside the doors, laid thousands of its inhabitants without homes, food or the basic comforts in life. Others just barely surviving. The divide in society between those who had everything and those that had nothing, it made Margaret shiver.

In her quest to relieve herself, Margaret found herself getting sucked into the very issue she fought against – admiring the luxury summer dresses. Captivated by their colours, material and class. Margaret began to rub the material between her sweat and sticky fingers. Margaret has never spent much money on clothes. Most of her clothes came from the vintage or second hand shops searching through bundles of jumpers and shirts that were worth a fiver. Although she did not spend much money on clothes, she did appreciate them and despite having little income always styled herself utilising the uniqueness of thrift shop finds. In a way fashion in itself was an art form. In an trance state, she

turned the price tag over in the hope of added another piece to her collections. It read 2,000.

2,000, Margaret thought – hard to believe such a small dress could cost so much. She immediately put the glamour back and snapped back into her non oblivious reality and continued on her path to the toilet.

As Margaret washed her hands, she noticed one sweat stain in particular was still illuminated cross the back of her dress. She inspected it.

Only it wasn't sweat, but it was a stain. A dark stain.

As Margaret shifted the linen into focus, she noticed the large encompassing stain, she had shown the entire first floor, was in fact a dark brown stain. A stain that was identical to a brown accident stain. She shrieked in horror. How embarrassing, she thought. Then it came to her. Prior to subjecting herself to the judgment of the shop, she had sat down on a bench outside next to a flower pot, she did not check the seat for dirt.

Now after all that conjure to get to the toilets, it truly did look as if she had an accident.

She attempted to elevate the stain scrubbing the thick cloth with soap. Despite her efforts, the stain rose to the challenge and started to speck across the entire back of the dress. She could not meet her friends like this.

With a final sigh of defeat, Margaret opened her purse and began to accept her fate of a massive expense. She would cover her face with her sunglasses and go buy a new dress in the H&M next door. Hard to believe, this was the start of her day.

Can You Believe it?

Laura Alves

I know this may be hard to believe but it did happen and only a few weeks ago. We have a habit of making our own assumptions about the behaviour of animals and labelling them either wild or a pet. If you have a bird for a pet, it is usually a small bird and it's kept in a cage. Sometimes in big cities you can spot from your window a very large bird flying and you think it's a bird of prey. You hope it doesn't come in your window's direction or there could be some damage inside. In the very least some glasses would break... on the other hand, synonym of very docile pets are dogs and cats. You can have them inside a flat and as long as you take them out for a walk a few times a day they are a happy bunch. Cats don't even need that much walking, they can lie on that couch all day long.

Well, I was appreciating the beauty of this large bird the other day but still concerned with my safety as these are wild animals, it certainly must be a bird of prey! All of a sudden a cat turns up very fast in its direction and it did all it could think of at the time to save its own life: it flew! Right to the top of the tree! The cat suddenly disappeared, I have no idea where it went to! And the bird came back to the floor as soon as it was sure there was no more danger. The cat was probably hidden somewhere planning its next attack!

Hard to believe

Bernadette O'Reilly

Its forty-two years since you left
The years have flown
Just like birds in flight migrating
Or leaves dancing away with the
Autumn wind
As they did the day of your departure
Do you entertain regrets I wonder
Thoughts of you sometimes erupt
Flames smothering beneath the ashes.

Unexpected Company

Elaine Reardon

Pokeberry took root in inhospitable gravel.
heavy with inky berries, it gave lushness
to a tired patch of wild brambles and sweet fern.
Pokeberries can heal, a few drops at a time,
to help support healing, but is poisonous .

New wild flowers flourished in the lawn- who wouldn't feel joy
with so many wild Brown-Eyed Susans nodding
hellos each time you passed? Wild purple asters
crept in; their buds burst open like tiny bright stars
when nights fell cold.

But an exotic stranger that took all season
to flower was the sound of bells and hosannas
when it finally opened by the porch stairs
saying, hello, I'm here. I'm not coming in,
or course, unless you invite me; I'll just be here--
in all my glory. The better to seduce you.

When the bloom opened, I recalled my first
Holy Communion and a sense of my heart opening
to the great mystery, of being more than myself,
somehow. That's what happened when
looked deep into Datura, Devil's Trumpet.

I sought to identify it- Sorcerer's Flower, one that could
bring visions, or death. I arrived at my New England doorstep,
from far away warm climates, Mexico and South America.
Datura stayed two seasons before it disappeared.

Yesterday Once More

Max McCoubrey

I know this may be hard to believe but today is our golden wedding day. We walked down the aisle hand in hand at noon on this day fifty years, ago. I was thinking about all the changes since.

Remember we wrote our letters on a typewriter copied them by inserting sheet of carbon paper and correct our mistakes with Tippex?

We answered the phone without knowing who was calling us? Eamon De Valera was ineligible that year, to run again for president, because he had served two consecutive terms.

Homo sexuality was illegal.

We paid our bills with cash or cheque

The constitution of Ireland removed the Catholic Church from its 'special position'.

As we promised to love each other forever.

We put gold rings on our fingers, kissed and walked into the future.

The rungs lasted longer than the marriage. Our home ended up being derelict whilst our solicitors fought over the value.

And forty years of silence between us, passed.

Yet,

I still think about you all the time.

I know!

This may be hard to believe.

Yemanja

Heloisa Prieto

(excerpt from The Storyteller)

“This is an ancient tale. In the beginning of time all beings were shapeshifters. People and nature were one. Nowadays, according to Ifa traditions, we call our ancestors gods, or orixas, but once upon a time they were humans whose connection with nature was so deep and strong they could literally move mountains.

Yemanja was such a beautiful and generous woman she was welcomed everywhere. She travelled spreading words of wisdom that healed people's hearts. Finally, she decided she wanted to have a house of her own. She chose a town called Ewi, where the king, named Elewi, loved her indigo clothes so much that invited her to live in his palace.

She was very happy there, but from time to time she felt the need to travel to the towns and forests she had visited before. During these journeys she always gathered leaves, fruits and roots for dyeing her clothes blue. Suddenly she met a hunter who asked her to identify herself. “Yemanja Omo Je Elewi” she said. He introduced himself as Okere Aganju Sola Okunrin”. They spent their time enjoying each other's company. Finally, Okere asked her to marry him.

Yemanja went back to king Elewi for advice. He told her she could be happy in their marriage as long as she acted as a counsellor to Okere. He was known to be a ruthless warrior and to take slaves after winning his battles.

She followed the advice and told her lover to stop making wars, to give up overpowering others, and, most of all, never to take slaves again. Yemanja also asked her future husband to accept her son Shango and treat him as his own. He told her he would certainly love Shango, and Yemanja insisted:

“You must never claim another man’s child as your property. There should be no slaves.” Okere agreed to all conditions and, in return, asked his bride never to enter a room in his palace he always kept locked. This is where he liked to keep his magical secrets. Their marriage

took place with music, dance and delicious food. Okere started to plant, enjoying a peaceful life.

One day Yemanja saw that rain was coming and her husband had forgotten his favourite belt outside their palace. She picked it up, but the nearest room was the forbidden one. All she wanted was to keep his belt from the rain. Okere was away, but he felt her presence in his magic room and was really upset. He did not want to share his magic with his wife. Yemanja was angry at her husband for being so rude and patronizing. She was not interested in magic, after all, to her, shape shifting was a second nature, no need for secrets. So she turned into a river of clear blue waters. She knew she would be more loving and peaceful by flowing like a river and she wanted to forgive her beloved. To Yemanja, becoming the river or merging into the sea was a very natural thing to do. Now, Okere was angry and he used his powers and shape shifted into a huge mountain to block the stream. Yemanja turned into another stream to keep on flowing. Okere became another mountain. They went on until there were nine mountains.

Finally, Shango, Yemanja's loving son, the orixa of justice, decided to save his mother. He blew a strong stream of fire, pulled thunder and lightning from the skies and smashed the nine mountains. Yemanja realized she could become a woman again, but still she left a trail of lovely blue water streams for people to drink from."

I Know You Might Find This Hard To Believe

Mark L'estrange

The bell went in the Garda station, Paddy ran out to see who was there, there was a man at the counter with a plant covering his face, Paddy asked him. "Can I help you sir." "Yes, sorry about the plant was just told by the boss not to show my face encase any one is around when I am taking the package off you."

Paddy laughed saying "Are you having a laugh the disguise is not working I can see you through the plant, you may as well put it down." "Ok, you have a point." He removed the plant covering his face.

"Can I see some ID before we hand this over please." The soldier showed his id and a note from his superior. The Super came out with the suitcase and gave it to him, he sent Paddy with the soldier so he would know when they have deactivated the cloning system.

Paddy and the soldier entered the army barracks and went straight to the secure lab where they brought the machine, The soldier said, "Paddy, can you please wait outside for a moment while I bring this in and explain the contents of the suitcase to the guys, I need to get you clearance to enter also." "Ok but don't leave me too long as you can understand these guys we are dealing with are most likely on their way to Dublin now, and I know they will be headed straight to the Garda Station."

He was only gone in for five minutes when he ran out to Paddy in a panic, "I know you might find this hard to believe but as soon as we opened the suitcase, a few lads have just appeared in the room quick come in." It was the gang from Mexico and they had Julie and Stephen hostage, they said if you don't give us this suitcase you can say goodbye to your friends.

Paddy didn't enter the room yet, he just seen from the window the room was filled with these guys, he decided to ring Julie first to make sure she wasn't being cloned by these, She answered saying "Where are you paddy? I am worried about you, there was some strange men outside our house earlier taking photos of me." Next he rang Stephen

and he answered saying "Any word on me getting home my head is wrecked." Paddy said to them both "Sit tight I have this under control."

He Ran into the room got them all spinning which made all their disguises disappear and there weapons drop to the floor, the army lads couldn't believe what they were seeing one of them said "This is some power you have mate, how are you doing this?" "Don't know to be honest only found out I could do this a while ago but it's handy to have for guys like this"

The soldiers in the lab worked on the cloning device while the crooks continued spinning, they eventually deactivated it and they noticed there was also a tracker build into the case too, they were also able to destroy this too. Paddy stopped them spinning and the solders took them away for interrogation, as they were getting taking away the gang said. "You don't know who you're dealing with we have the Mexican authority's on our side so I would advise you to let us go." The army where having none of it saying, "Two chances of that slim and none you're in our country now we have our rules." They could see them pressing buttons to find there was nothing working any more. Paddy said to them. "Having some trouble getting your cloning buttons working are you?"

To be continued